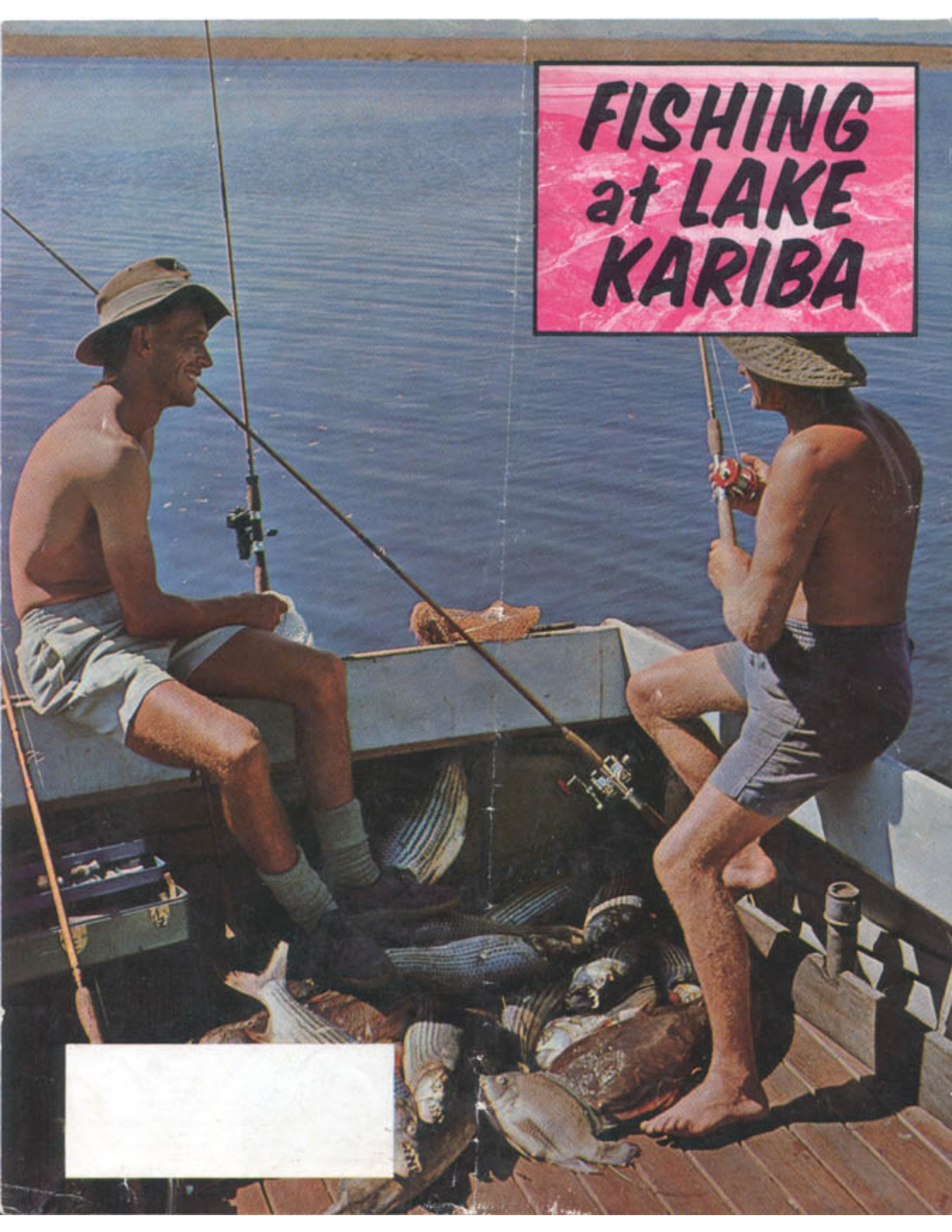


# **FISHING at LAKE KARIBA**







A beautiful, large black bream is being landed by John Campbell, another well-known Rhodesian angler. The picture illustrates fishing among the half-submerged *Mopani* trees which are a feature of parts of the lake.



**K**ARIBA Lake, the biggest man-made lake in the world, is an anglers' paradise, easily accessible by road and air from the main cities of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. This statement is no "anglers' story": the abundance of fish, of many species, will amaze the visitor. Even the most inexperienced sportsman returns to camp grinning from ear to ear, proudly holding up the "big one" that *didn't* get away! Catches totalling hundreds of pounds are not uncommon.

The most sought-after fish is the tiger, closely followed by the bream family. The latter include the large black bream (*Tilapia mossambica*), the weed-eating (or red-belly) bream, (*Tilapia melanocephala*), the plankton-eating bream (*Tilapia macrochir*), and the green bream (*Serranochromis coelestis*). One or two of the terrific fighting yellow bream (*Serranochromis robustus*) have also been caught in the lake: normally they are found above the Victoria Falls in the upper Zambezi, but they have somehow found their way down to Kariba, much to the delight of anglers.

Other species of fish to be found are the chess, a kupa, bottlenose, Cornish jack, and (in the swampy areas) the lung fish. There are also barbel, electric barbel (which give an unsuspecting angler a

severe electric shock), the giant cat-fish (known to Rhodesians as vundu), squeakers (an excellent tiger bait), yellow fish, Hunyani salmon—and, of course, eels.

The recommended tackle for tiger fishing is as follows:

A fairly stout glass-fibre rod, in the Purgas range of the 96L, 54L, 60H, and 66H is recommended. (Purgas rods ideal for the purpose are the H60 and H70: cheap rods are likely to be smashed to smithereens by these magnificent fighting fish).

A reel capable of carrying up to 200 yards of nylon line (of breaking-strain of 23lb. to 30lb.), with a drag (or slipping clutch) is essential. The Penn 500 is ideal, followed by the Penn 140, 150, 155, 25 and 26.

Hooks must be strong and sharp, preferably with a long shank to take a good-sized fish-billet bait. The Mustard O'Shaunnessy 6/0, 7/0 and 8/0 hooks fall into this category.

A wire trace of 27lb. breaking-strain and with size 1/0 black swivels, complete the equipment.

Tiger fish are predators. When the tiger strikes it hurts itself into the air, shaking its head violently from side to side in an endeavour to throw the lure. His teeth, similar to a dog's eye teeth, can often be heard clomping on the spoon, causing deep gouges in the metal.

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Nick Bey trawling with a spoon at Kariba. This is done when the anglers hunt for a shoal of tiger fish. When a fish strikes, the boat is stopped and anchored. Fishing then begins with "trip" bait.

Capacity: 130m. acre feet  
Length: 175 miles  
Max. width: 18 miles



A morning's catch of a competing number of tiger fish, after fighting tiger fish (striped and with teeth), and several giant cat fish. The fighting tiger (*Heteropogon vittatus*) is a most sporting fish and a great attraction for anglers.

This is the type of boat, although some fishing saloons at Kariba. In the background is the dam from which electricity is generated. The lake is a masterpiece of wild and many anglers can frequently be seen along the shore.





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When a fish is hooked, the boat is usually stopped. The job, then, is to attract more fish: tiger normally swim in shoals, and, after the gymnastics of the first fish, the others become excited and interested. Thus, immediately after the first catch, the angler, discarding artificial lures, cuts into strips the chessa and n'kupe bait which has been caught, scaled and filleted in advance. The strips, about 5 inches long, are sewn on to hooks and are cast out and allowed to sink; and the boat is allowed to drift with the wind. The fillets are eagerly snatched up, and a fish is allowed to run off with the bait for about 20 yards. The angler then strikes hard: he is almost certain to hook his catch.

Reports have come to hand of a 50lb. tiger fish caught in the lake: the confirmed Rhodesian record is 34lb. 3 oz.

Vundu, barbel and electric barbel are caught by anglers fishing for tiger, as described above, on the same tackle. The vundu is the gamest of these fish and runs to a terrific weight: the largest recorded is 368lb.

Bream, chessa and n'kupe are taken on worms. The required and most suitable tackle is as follows:

A 6 ft. spinning-rod, the best range being Phantom, and a good spinning reel, are recommended, and, in this class, the Mitchell reels are excellent (numbers 305 and 301 being first choice). Alternately, a short bait-casting rod, also in the Phantom range, and a small multiplying reel as produced by Record, are just as efficient. These reels should be filled with nylon line of a breaking-strain of 9lb. to 12lb. Recommended hooks are the Mustad series 92247 size 2.

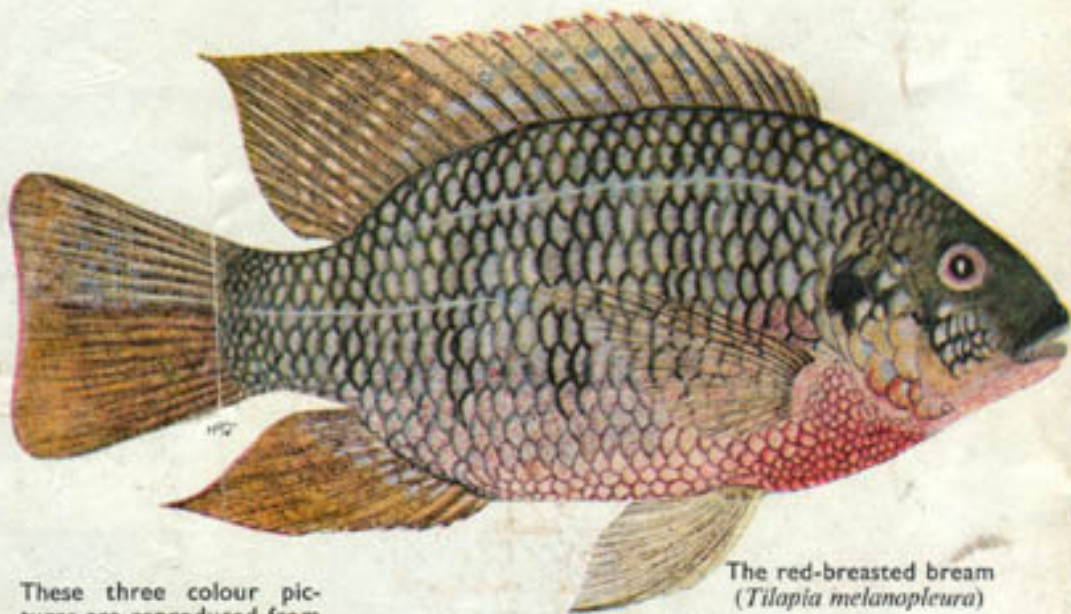
The fish are found amongst the mopani trees in 10 to 15ft. of water, or in the shallows of the bush-clearings in the semi-submerged grass. The angler has no need to cast his bait of earthworms, as the fish can be caught by dropping the bait over the side of the boat and allowing it to run to the bottom. The bites are felt as short tugs, and a strong pull is necessary for a strike. The bream are a magnificent table fish, the others being rather bony although excellent fighters.

**NOTE:** Central African Airways recently inaugurated "all-in" fishing week-ends at Kariba, including air fare from Salisbury, at the extraordinarily low price of £20 5s.

## Famous Fishes of Lake Kariba



The fighting "tiger"  
(*Hydrocyon vittatus*)



The red-breasted bream  
(*Tilapia melanopleura*)

These three colour pictures are reproduced from a recently published book *Freshwater Fishes* (Stuart Manning, Bulawayo) by Rex A. Jubb, the most authoritative book on the fishes of Rhodesia. The colour illustrations are the work of the author's wife, Hilda Jubb.



The Hunyani salmon  
(*Labeo altivelis*)